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SCOTT SCHLOEGEL—CHIEF OF STAFF  
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*Congress of the United States*  
*House of Representatives*  
Washington, DC 20515-2201

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**ASSISTANT WHIP**

November 3, 2008

The Honorable David Obey  
Chairman  
House Committee on Appropriations  
H-218 U.S. Capitol  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Jerry Lewis  
Ranking Member  
House Committee on Appropriations  
1016 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Obey and Ranking Member Lewis:

As you consider which programs deserve additional resources in a prospective second economic stimulus spending bill, I respectfully ask you to consider including funding for the construction of an additional icebreaking vessel for the Great Lakes.

The Upper Great Lakes serve as a main thoroughfare for iron ore being transported to America's steel mills and other cargos to destinations in the United States, Canada, and overseas. During the winter months, 17 million tons of commerce moves through the Great Lakes. Icebreakers play an important role in keeping channels open for this commerce to continue in the winter months.

In the last few years, the ice breaking capacity on the Great Lakes has decreased dramatically. The Coast Guard Cutter ACACIA was decommissioned on June 7, 2006, after over 60 years of service. In addition, the Canadian government decommissioned two of its icebreakers without replacing them.

Without a sufficient cutter presence, the businesses and individuals that rely on the Great Lakes are put at risk. The residents of Beaver Island relied upon the Coast Guard's icebreaking assets in Charlevoix, Michigan to assure their safety and support their economy. During the 2008 winter season, Beaver Island again had to make an emergency call to the Coast Guard to break the ice to facilitate a fuel shipment. In addition, in March 2008, two ships collided in the Mackinaw Straits, causing about \$1.5 million in damage to the ships, because there was not a sufficient channel in the ice due to limited ice breaking capabilities.

It is important that we appropriate funding for a new Coast Guard cutter to replace the ACACIA and ensure the Coast Guard can meet its operational responsibilities on the Great Lakes. Investing in another cutter similar to the MACKINAW will have a positive effect on the economy and create jobs. Such a project would immediately put people back to work and would benefit the Coast Guard's long-term mission on the Great Lakes.

PLEASE REPLY TO:

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Thank you for your consideration of my request. If you have any questions, please contact me or Jamie Euken with my staff at 202-225-4735.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Bart Stupak", written in a cursive, stylized script.

BART STUPAK  
Member of Congress

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